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THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 72/NO. 19 MAY 12, 2008

INSIDE

Cuba's land reform, int'l solidarity discussed at Iowa campus event

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Legalize all immigrants now! Stop the raids and deportations!

Statement by Socialist Workers Party presidential candidate

The following statement was issued April 29 by Róger Calero, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for president of the United States.

I am proud to be joining tens of thousands of my fellow workers marching on May 1 to demand, "Legalization now!" and "Stop the raids and deportations!"

I am marching in Los Angeles, where workers from the Micro Solutions plant in Van Nuys, California, are one of the lead contingents. The plant was raided by the hated immigration police in February. Since then, 138 of them have been fighting the U.S. government's effort to deport them.

Many of these workers have been forced to wear heavy tracking bracelets on their ankles so the police can monitor their activities. In recent weeks an immigration judge slapped a curfew on them to try to foil their organizing efforts.

In spite of this they continue to fight publicly. "We are workers, not criminals"—one of the popular slogans of this movement—is exactly what these workers are showing their class brothers and sisters by standing up and fighting this injustice.

The Van Nuys workers are part of an emerging vanguard in the U.S.

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Militant/Lea Sherman

Students across California held protests April 23 against U.S. government moves to deport Vietnamese immigrants. Above, protest at the University of California in Davis.

Acquittal of N.Y. cops who killed Sean Bell sparks protests

BY BRIAN WILLLIAMS

NEW YORK—Hundreds of people took to the streets here after Queens Supreme Court Justice Arthur Cooperman on April 25 cleared three city police officers, in a nonjury trial, of all charges in the killing Sean Bell, a 23-year-old African American.

"I'm angry, frustrated, and in shock," said Jennifer Claude, 49, a member of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 1199, at a rally of 300 protesters across the street from the courthouse the evening of the acquittal.

"They killed Sean all over again," said Bell's fiancée Nicole Paultre Bell, at an April 26 rally in Harlem. "The justice system let me down. At every march I will be at the front."

Five undercover cops gunned down Bell in a barrage of 50 bullets on Nov. 25, 2006, while he together with his

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Strong start to 'Militant' sub target week

BY OLYMPIA NEWTON

April 29—A special target week in the *Militant*'s spring subscription drive got off to a strong start. Supporters of the paper won more than 300 new readers, bringing the eight-week campaign to win 2,400 subscriptions closer to being on schedule.

A highlight of this weekend's efforts was campaigning with the new Pathfinder pamphlet *Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?*, which is available for just $1 with any subscription.

"We started campaigning with the new pamphlet Friday night at a Militant Labor Forum. The next day we went

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California students protest move to deport Vietnamese

BY BETSEY STONE

DAVIS, California—Students at the University of California, Davis rallied outside the student union April 23 to demand a halt to government plans to deport thousands of Vietnamese immigrants.

The protest, organized by Southeast Asians Making Immediate Change, began with a spirited march across campus with signs saying: "Stop Deportations!"; "Don't Take My Mom"; and "Melt the ICE."—referring to the Immigration

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Truckers rally in Washington against fuel costs

BY NED MEASEL

WASHINGTON, D.C., April 28—With horns blaring, more than 200 trucks circled downtown today near the White House and Capitol building. The convoy was followed by a march and rally of more than 100 truckers and their supporters to protest the high cost of diesel fuel.

They carried signs reading, "What comes first—kids or gas?" and "Stop the open pipeline through Wall Street." The rally formed in a cold pouring rain and was followed by a press conference in the Senate office building before drivers were chased out by Capitol Police.

Chants of "Now!" echoed through the halls at every demand for relief from high fuel prices. Demands included the release of oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserves, windfall taxes on the oil companies, and price controls on oil. Plans to hold another protest in New York City on May 1 and a national shutdown May 5 were announced.

"I drove 1,400 miles and spent $1,300 on fuel," trucker Michael Garret told the *Militant*. Referring to the impact of high fuel and maintenance costs on safety, Garret said, "You take risks that you wouldn't otherwise because you have no money for maintenance. I can't pay the rent and fix the truck, but if I don't fix the truck I'm not paying the rent next month." He said he pays $13,000 a year for insurance and $10,000–$15,000 for

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Militant/Seth Dellinger

Lisa Martin and her husband Clair, a Pennsylvania truck driver, at April 28 rally in Washington, D.C., protesting fuel costs.

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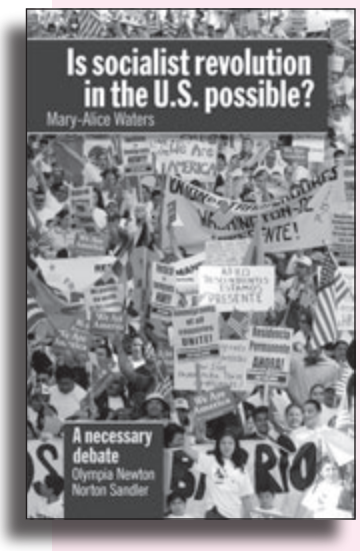
NEW FROM PATHFINDER

Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?

by Mary-Alice Waters



"Not only is socialist revolution possible; revolutionary struggle is *inevitable*. It will be initiated at first not by the toilers, but forced upon us by the crisis-driven assaults of the propertied classes. . . . What is not inevitable, however, is the outcome of these coming revolutionary struggles. That is where political clarity, organization, discipline, and the caliber of proletarian leadership become decisive." —$5

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Maoist party makes gains in Nepal elections

BY TERRY COGGAN

AUCKLAND, New Zealand, April 20—Initial results from April 10 elections in Nepal indicate that the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) will be the biggest party in the country's constituent assembly. Both the Nepali Congress Party and the United Marxist-Leninist Party (UML), which have dominated parliament since popular protests forced the monarchy to call elections in the 1990s, were handed major losses.

The results register the unpopularity of a monarchy that has ruled Nepal since independence. While the CPN(M) won 120 of 240 directly elected seats, the Nepali Congress Party won only 34, and the Stalinist UML, 31. The latter two parties have shared a government with King Gyanendra.

The elections were mapped out as part of a 2006 peace deal in which the CPN(M) abandoned a decade-long guerrilla struggle in exchange for cabinet posts. The CPN(M) campaigned for establishing a republic, parliamentary rule, and capitalist development.

"We are fighting feudalism, we are not fighting against capitalism," CPN(M) leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal, known as Prachanda, told the *New York Times* before election day. "In this phase of our socioeconomic development, it is not possible to have a socialist revolution . . . We will create a conducive atmosphere to have more profit for the capitalist."

Nepal, straddling the mountainous Himalayan region between China and India, is marked by semifeudal relations in the countryside. Agriculture accounts for 79 percent of employment, with industry largely limited to small-scale processing of jute and oilseed. Eighteen million of its 28 million inhabitants do not have access to electricity.

An April 14 article in the *Economist* reports that villagers in the Kaski region in central Nepal said they voted for the CPN(M) because they thought the Maoists would bring electricity and equality.

The party began a guerrilla war against the monarchy in 1996. Over the next decade they built up a force of some 15,000 fighters and took control of large areas of the countryside. Attempting to turn the military situation around, King Gyanendra dissolved parliament in 2002. Three years later he declared a state of emergency. In 2006, 100,000 people marched in Kathmandu in opposition to these dictatorial measures, forcing Gyanendra to restore parliament.

As its name indicates, the party identifies with the policies of Mao Zedong, the deceased leader of the Chinese Communist Party. As the CPN(M) took control of sections of the countryside, their policies included forced collectivization of peasants.

They also weld anti–working-class moral strictures to the probusiness policies. Prachanda has advocated banning alcohol, gambling, and "vulgar" literature from India and the United States. Last year CPN(M) cadre in Kathmandu warned homeowners not to rent rooms to gays and lesbians, claiming homosexuality is "a by-product of capitalism."

Ruling class accepts results

The election result has prompted positive responses from ruling-class figures in Nepal. The BBC noted on May 16 that a "senior army figure, Brig. Gen. Shiva Ram Pradhan, has expressed the willingness of the military to work with the new government." It added, "The chairman of the country's chamber of commerce has praised Maoist leaders for their promise to listen to the private sector when working out economic policy."

Reaction from the imperialist powers that have historically dominated Nepal was low-key. Both British and U.S. government officials hailed the elections for being peaceful. The CPN(M) is in talks with U.S. officials to lift Washington's "terrorist" designation of the organization.

'Free Mumia!' demand Philadelphia marchers

Militant/John Staggs

PHILADELPHIA—Some 500 people marched here April 19 for the immediate release of Black rights fighter Mumia Abu-Jamal, who was framed up in 1981 on charges of killing a cop. On March 27 a U.S. federal court upheld Abu-Jamal's conviction, but said that a lower court may review his death sentence. About 20 skinheads from Pennsylvania and Maryland organized a counterdemonstration.

—JOHN STAGGS

Charges dropped against Miami students arrested after cop riot

BY BERNIE SENTER

MIAMI—Prosecutors have dropped charges against 21 students at Miami Edison High School arrested after a lunchtime protest was attacked by police.

Over 60 police cars converged on the school February 29 to break up a peaceful protest organized by hundreds of students. The youth were outraged that the day before, the assistant principal, Javier Pérez, had manhandled a classmate. Pictures and videos taken by students on their cell phones recorded the police beating protesters and were aired on television and circulated on the Internet. Parents learning of the police attack joined in protests outside the school, which is located in Miami's Little Haiti neighborhood.

Demonstrations continued through the evening and the following week. The Haitian Lawyers Association has handled all the cases free of charge.

"This is a victory, but we don't know what's going to happen to the others," 11th grader Alain Vil told the *Militant.* The cases against five other students are still pending.

In another victory for the students, Javier Pérez has not returned to the school. The assistant principal was reassigned work elsewhere in the school district.

THE MILITANT

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Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the Militant's views. These are expressed in editorials.

Washington pressures N. Korea with claims of nuclear deal with Syria

BY DOUG NELSON

Washington says it has evidence that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) aided Syria in the construction of a nuclear reactor. The accusation is part of Washington's decades-long campaign to isolate and pressure north Korea.

Israeli warplanes bombed a site in Syria last September after Tel Aviv shared surveillance footage with Washington. The White House went public April 24 with videos of what it claims was a plutonium reactor under construction in Syria. The design of the facilities and personnel at the site shown in the video, U.S. officials say, point to north Korean involvement.

The UN International Atomic Energy Agency, while criticizing the bombing and the withholding of information for seven months, has pledged to investigate the claims.

The governments of Israel and the United States were silent about the airstrike when it happened; the press was low-key. At the time, the U.S. government was pressing north Korea to rapidly dismantle a reactor there, disclose more information, and concede to inspections. Tel Aviv was involved in its own pressure campaign against Syria. The site was cleared since and another building constructed in its place.

The Israeli government has presented no evidence that Damascus had, or planned to acquire nuclear fuel to run a reactor. The Syrian government denies the site was for nuclear purposes.

Washington has been leading a campaign of harsh economic sanctions and threats against north Korea to try and force the government to abandon its nuclear program. While U.S. officials condemn Pyongyang for sharing its technology, the U.S. government benefits from nuclear technology sharing deals with other countries, including Brazil, Israel, India, and Japan.

The United States, which currently has about 5,400 nuclear warheads, restarted production of nuclear weapons last year and is moving ahead to develop a ballistic missile shield in order to be able to use its nuclear arsenal unchecked. Washington is also the only government to have ever used nuclear weapons when it bombed the densely populated Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of World War II, killing hundreds of thousands.

Under the imperialist-led pressure campaign, the north Korean government agreed to end its nuclear program last February. The DPRK shut down and began to decommission its nuclear reactor in July.

Under the terms of the agreement, the governments of the United States, Japan, south Korea, Russia, and China agreed to provide north Korea 1 million tons of fuel oil. Washington also said it would start the process of normalizing diplomatic relations with the DPRK, begin removing Pyongyang from the list of "terrorist" organizations, and end some sanctions.

Washington has made no moves to live up to any part of its end of the deal. The new accusations come amid debates within the U.S. ruling class on how best to maximize economic and political pressure against the DPRK, including whether to follow through with funding for the fuel and the other agreed-to terms.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

FLORIDA

Miami

Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible? Speaker: Margaret Trowe, SWP candidate for Congress, 17th C.D. Fri., May 9. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. *8365 NE 2nd Ave. Room 206. Tel: (305) 756-4436.*

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Workers Protest Rising Food Prices: The Profit System Is Behind the Crisis. Fri., May 9. Dinner, 7 p.m.; program, 8 p.m. *307 W 36th St. Tel: (212) 629-6649.*

Orhan Tsolak

Workers protest immigration raids at restaurants April 20 in London's Trafalgar Square

Restaurant workers in UK protest raids, deportations

BY JULIE CRAWFORD AND ROSE KNIGHT

LONDON—Thousands of immigrant workers from Bangladesh, China, India, Pakistan, and Turkey rallied in Trafalgar Square April 20 to demand an end to immigration raids and deportations.

"We need to stop the immigration cops from raiding our restaurants," said Hussain Ahmed, a chef from Buckinghamshire. "Some of these workers have lived and worked up to 8, 10, and 20 years in this country. We need to fight for them to be regularized." Reflecting the opinion of many workers at the rally, he said, "To be able to work is a human right."

Buses came from cities and towns across England, Wales, and Scotland. Banners presented a range of demands, including "Support the move to regularize undocumented workers," and "SOL: Save Our Livelihoods." A contingent from the Chinese Immigration Concern Committee had placards calling for an end to British Immigration Agency (BIA) raids at Chinese restaurants. Immigration cops seized 29 workers in London's Chinatown in October. Bao Dong, a Chinese restaurant worker from Colchester in East England, said that Chinese restaurants there had been raided too.

The demonstration was called by the Ethnic Catering Alliance, and included the Bangladeshi Caterers Association, the Guild of Bangladeshi Restaurateurs, and the Bangladeshi Chamber of Commerce. Several restaurant owners spoke at the rally, complaining of intimidation by cops from the BIA.

A restaurant owner from Kent said that it was not so much the raids he objected to, "but the way they do them. They come in at the busiest times, intimidate the customers and treat us like criminals. Why don't they check ports?"

"I oppose these immigration raids and deportations, and the heavy fines for restaurant owners," said Mohmammed Rahmen, joint secretary of the Bangladesh Teachers Association and a member of the National Union of Teachers. His family is in the restaurant business.

Young women from the Chinese community staffed a table encouraging participants to sign a letter asking members of Parliament to call on the immigration minister to stop raids on catering outlets, to place catering workers on a government "Shortage Occupation List," and to grant workers in the catering industry an automatic 50 points toward their immigration application.

A points-based system introduced in February will allow only "skilled" workers into the United Kingdom. In addition, all applicants will have to pass an English test, unless they have 1 million pounds or more to invest.

Promotions of generals aims to integrate Iraq, Afghan wars

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, April 24—The U.S. military's top general in Iraq, David Petraeus, will be nominated to head the military's Central Command. CENTCOM is responsible for all U.S. military operations in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia.

Petraeus would be replaced in Iraq by his deputy, Lt. Gen. Raymond Odierno, who will be promoted to the rank of four star general.

The moves keep together the two men most responsible for operations of the "surge" of 30,000 additional U.S. troops to Iraq last year. The promotions integrate the two major fronts of Washington's "global war on terror"—Iraq and Afghanistan—with the aim of stabilizing the military situation in Afghanistan through an escalation of counterinsurgency operations there.

Petraeus is considered a top expert on counterinsurgency warfare, and the Pentagon hopes he will produce similar results in Afghanistan as those in Iraq.

The U.S. military made progress on the ground during Petraeus's command in Iraq. Car bombings have decreased; civilian and military deaths are down; former Sunni militias have turned on al-Qaeda, driving it from Anbar and other Sunni areas; and some laws aimed at stabilizing a governing arrangement between competing Sunni and Shiite capitalists forces have been passed. On April 25 the largest bloc of Sunni capitalist parties announced they would end a nearly year-long boycott of the Shiite-led government of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki and return to posts in his cabinet.

Defense Secretary Robert Gates said the promotions of Petraeus and Odierno "probably preserves the likelihood of continued momentum and progress" in the region.

There are about 47,000 NATO troops in Afghanistan, of which 19,000 are U.S. troops. As of two months ago, another 11,000 U.S. troops were stationed there under Washington's command.

During a NATO meeting in April, President Bush pledged that Washington would increase troop deployment to Afghanistan in 2009. Traveling with Bush, Gates pointed to the strong bipartisan support for such a move. "I think no matter who is elected president they would want to be successful in Afghanistan," Gates said.

Commenting on the promotions of Petraeus and Odierno, leading Democrats have been pressing to escalate the war in Afghanistan and the Pakistan border regions.

"Our ground forces' readiness and the battles in Afghanistan and against al-Qaeda in Pakistan have suffered as a result of the current costly Iraq strategy," said Senate Majority Leader Harold Reid.

Al-Sadr and Iran

Among the countries within CENTCOM's responsibility is Iran. During an April 8 report to Congress Petraeus said Iran represents the greatest long-term threat to a stable Iraq. Washington and the Iraqi government have accused Iran of training "Special Groups" of Shiite militias, including among al-Sadr's Mahdi Army.

At the same time, the military success of the surge in Iraq has increased pressure on the Iranian government to collaborate with Washington. According to the private U.S. intelligence outfit *Stratfor*, Tehran probably intervened on behalf of the U.S.-backed Iraqi government to broker a ceasefire with the Mahdi militia, a serious blow to al-Sadr.

On March 25 Iraqi government troops launched a massive assault on the Mahdi Army in Basra. The militia responded with stepped-up attacks launched from the Sadr City district of Baghdad. At least 700 people were killed, according to the United Nations. Al-Sadr announced a ceasefire April 25.

YS builds May Day actions on campuses, at protests

This column is written and edited by members of the Young Socialists, a revolutionary socialist youth organization. For more information contact the YS at 306 W. 37th St., 10th floor, New York, NY 10018; tel. (212) 629-6649; e-mail: youngsocialists@mac.com.

YOUNG SOCIALISTS IN ACTION

BY EDDIE BECK

CARROLLTON, Georgia—Young socialists are campaigning on campuses and in working-class neighborhoods to build actions in Georgia demanding amnesty and legalization now for all undocumented workers.

"We've met students who are planning to join the march on May 1," said Loretta Van Pelt, 27, a YS member and the Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress in Georgia's 3rd District. "I've been explaining that when elected I will put legislation forward for amnesty and immediate legal status for all."

"I'm not going to school on May Day," said Wesley Lewis, a student at Lassiter High School in Marietta, Georgia. Lewis, a member of the Young Socialists, has been encouraging fellow students to come out and join the May 1 action in Atlanta. "Several organizations got together this year to make sure a May 1 demonstration happened."

YS members also set up a campaign table near the Lawrence Mobile Home Park here in Carrollton, where last June immigration cops raided several workers' homes and a nearby congregating point for day laborers. One worker immediately picked up the new Pathfinder pamphlet *Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?* and decided to buy it with an introductory subscription to the *Militant.*

Nationwide, Young Socialists are explaining to youth attracted to working-class struggles why the fight for legalization is the central question facing the working class today, and they are encouraging other young people to get involved. In New York, Young Socialists promoted the May Day march at street actions protesting the acquittal of three cops on trial for killing Sean Bell, a 23-year-old African American. "One young woman who was holding up a sign representing the number of bullets cops unloaded on Bell asked to have her picture taken with the May 1st flyer after receiving it from YS members," said Maura DeLuca, a YS member in New York.

Militant/Maura DeLuca

A woman displays a flyer for the May Day march for immigrant rights and one of 50 signs representing the police bullets that killed Sean Bell at an April 26 action in New York protesting the cops' acquittal. She learned of the May Day action from Young Socialists at the protest.

N.Y. official resigns as construction deaths mount

BY NANCY BOYASKO

NEW YORK—Amid growing criticism around an increase in fatal construction accidents, New York City Buildings Commissioner Patricia Lancaster resigned April 22. Thirteen construction workers have been killed on the job so far this year, compared to 12 for all of 2007.

Last month five workers, a foreman, and a tourist were killed and dozens injured when a crane collapsed while it was being extended. Other accidents in recent months include a fatal fall at a SoHo construction site, a building collapse in Harlem, and a fatal fall in Queens by a window installer.

At an April 17 City Council hearing, Lancaster admitted that New York's Buildings Department should not have issued a permit to the site where the crane collapsed since it did not conform to zoning regulations. The department now says that the 43-story design was too tall and violated four local zoning regulations—facts that were all known before the March 15 crane collapse.

There had been 38 complaints about the construction site, as well as a number of violations, 13 of which were open at the time of the collapse.

"The violations had nothing to do with this," said mayor Michael Bloomberg after the collapse. "Every large construction site has violations. They were not serious."

Retired ironworker Kerry Walker, who lives next to the construction site, had complained to the Buildings Department that the crane appeared dangerously unstable. On March 4, retired contractor Bruce Silberblatt had complained that the crane was not sufficiently braced. Crane inspector Edward Marquette was sent to check the site. He was arrested on March 20 after it was revealed that he never visited the site and had filed a fake report.

City officials claim that the crane was inspected on March 14 in preparation for being "jumped."

Lancaster attributed the increase in accidents on the city's construction boom. According to statistics released last fall, 29 laborers died in work-related accidents in New York City from September 2006 to September 2007, a 61 percent increase over the previous year. In 2006 the number of construction deaths was 43—an 87 percent increase over the previous year.

The majority of the deaths last year occurred at nonunion work sites.

Nonunion construction worker Daniel Colman described the conditions nonunion workers face. "At one building site, 32 floors were put up in 6 months. This many floors usually takes about a year. . . . Many hurt workers return to work the next day because we are not paid for time off due to injury."

'Militant' sub drive target week

Spring 'Militant' Subscription Drive
March 22 – May 18 ♦ Week 5 of 8

Country	Quota	Sold	%
UNITED KINGDOM			
London	**75**	**61**	**81%**
Edinburgh	**45**	**31**	**69%**
UK Total	**120**	**92**	**77%**
SWEDEN	**25**	**17**	**68%**
NEW ZEALAND	65	37	57%
UNITED STATES			
Newark, NJ*	**160**	**113**	**71%**
Los Angeles	**110**	**76**	**69%**
Atlanta	130	75	58%
New York	315	179	57%
Twin Cities	150	84	56%
Washington, D.C.	140	76	54%
Houston	90	48	53%
San Francisco	125	64	51%
Carrollton, GA	145	73	50%
Boston	60	30	50%
Miami	130	61	47%
Des Moines, IA	140	65	46%
Philadelphia	85	37	44%
Chicago	120	51	43%
Seattle	115	30	26%
Albuquerque, NM	10	2	20%
Other		14	
U.S. Total	2,025	1078	53%
AUSTRALIA	55	28	51%
CANADA	105	44	42%
Int'l Totals	2,395	1,296	54%
Goals/Should be	**2,400**	**1,500**	**63%**

* raised goal

Continued from front page

to the Little Haiti post office, an antiwar rally organized by high school students, the taxi-waiting area at the Miami airport, and the Bolivarian Circle meeting," reported Maggie Trowe, a garment worker in Miami, April 27. "Today we went to truck stops and back to the cab drivers."

Supporters of the paper in that city sold 12 subscriptions and 19 copies of the pamphlet over the weekend. In order to win new subscribers in the coming week, *Militant* supporters in Miami will participate in a tomato pickers' rally demanding piece rate increases, set up literature tables in the Black community, and march for legalization of immigrants.

Supporters of the paper in Los Angeles got a big boost this weekend at the L.A. Times Book Festival, where they sold 42 copies of the new pamphlet, 31 of them with subscriptions.

In Atlanta, supporters of the paper picked up 21 subscriptions by going door-to-door over the weekend, with 13 of the new readers also getting a copy of the pamphlet.

The special offer on *Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?* expires May 5.

'Militant' Fund pace picks up

BY ANGEL LARISCY

At the end of week five of an eight-week effort to raise $100,000 to finance the *Militant,* supporters of the paper have picked up efforts to win contributors to the fund.

From Canada Bev Bernardo reported that on April 26 they held a meeting on "Cuba and the Coming Revolution in North America" in Vancouver featuring Joe Young. "There were 22 people at the meeting, including two we met at tables that day and one at a meeting on Cuba the night before." Some $1,500 was raised at the event.

A banquet and program in northeast Atlanta featured Ellie Garcia, the Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Senate in Georgia, and Freddy Huinil, a member of Cajola Unidos en Solidaridad por Guatemala.

"The *Militant* reports on the successes of our class," Huinil told the meeting. "The recent meeting about *Our History Is Still Being Written* in Miami was a victory for our class,'" he said, referring to an April 6 meeting about the book on three Chinese Cuban generals in the Cuban Revolution.

More than $700 was collected at the Atlanta meeting, including $210 from three workers who recently began campaigning with the paper.

$100,000 'Militant' Fund Drive
March 22–May 18 ♦ Week 5 of 8

Country	Quota	Paid	%
CANADA*	**5,500**	**4,850**	**88%**
FRANCE	**260**	**180**	**69%**
AUSTRALIA*	2,200	1,260	57%
UNITED STATES			
Newark, NJ	**3,700**	**2,634**	**71%**
San Francisco	**12,000**	**7,775**	**65%**
Miami	**3,000**	**1,919**	**64%**
Los Angeles*	9,500	5,834	61%
New York	15,000	8,536	57%
Seattle	7,000	3,925	56%
Washington, D.C.*	4,300	2,290	53%
Houston	2,500	1,255	50%
Chicago*	8,125	3,830	47%
Atlanta	4,000	1,810	45%
Twin Cities*	5,200	2,347	45%
Des Moines, IA	2,000	647	32%
Boston	2,800	710	25%
Carrollton, GA	4,700	1,037	22%
Philadelphia	2,500	425	17%
Other		1,750	
U.S. Total	86,325	46,724	54%
NEW ZEALAND	3,200	1,353	42%
SWEDEN	1,000	386	39%
UNITED KINGDOM			
Edinburgh	600	0	0%
London	1,000	0	0%
UK Total	1,600	0	0%
Total	100,085	54,753	55%
Goal/Should be	**100,000**	**62,500**	**63%**

* raised goal

ON THE PICKET LINE

Teachers, public sector workers strike for pay raises in the UK

LONDON, April 25—Thousands of members of the National Union of Teachers (NUT) marched and rallied here yesterday in their first national strike in 21 years, demanding a 4.1 percent pay raise. At least a third of the schools in the United Kingdom were closed or disrupted.

The striking workers came from around the country to demand that their wages keep up with inflation. They were joined by lecturers from the University and College Union.

NUT member Liam Russell pointed out that there were three strikes taking place yesterday, and "I am here to show my support for all of them." He was referring to the 100,000 civil servants employed in Jobcentres and government benefits offices who were striking over pay issues.

"The tide is turning," said Sarah Anderson from Bedfordshire. "Had the members of the National Association of Schoolmasters been balloted, they would have joined us today."

One hand-made placard stated simply "Young People = Large Debts."

Speaking on behalf of the government, schools secretary Ed Balls said, "I think teachers ought to be teaching classes."

Teachers are expected to set more strike days.

—Alan Harris

Quebec meat packers walk out over suspensions

VALLÉE-JONCTION, Quebec—On April 18, 320 workers walked out of the cutting room at the Olymel pork cut and kill plant here to protest the suspension of two coworkers. The work stoppage closed the entire plant, which employs 1,100 production workers.

That evening a meeting of 500 workers, members of the Confederation of National Trade Unions, voted to continue the strike the next Monday even though the Labor Board had ruled the action illegal.

"They had suspended two people because they were not boning properly," Maxime Moreau, a new worker in the cutting room, told the *Militant*. "One had 35 years seniority."

"They don't respect the contract," said a kill floor worker who asked not to be identified for fear of company retribution. "The suspensions were the last straw."

On April 20 the workers decided to return after the company agreed to drop disciplinary measures against six workers and to accelerate arbitration for another.

Last year the workers accepted a 27 percent wage cut after voting it down several times.

—Joe Young

Ian Gavan

Thousands of teachers marched in London to demand a raise to keep up with inflation April 24, the same day 100,000 public-sector workers in Britain struck over wages.

New Zealand hospital workers win back pay after striking

AUCKLAND, New Zealand, April 23—Ten months after winning a wage raise, hospital workers employed by contractor Spotless Services will finally get paid. The victory followed a one-day strike April 2 at 18 hospitals around New Zealand.

Some 800 cleaners, kitchen workers, and orderlies, organized by the Service and Food Workers Union, were involved in the action to demand payment of a wage increase they won last July.

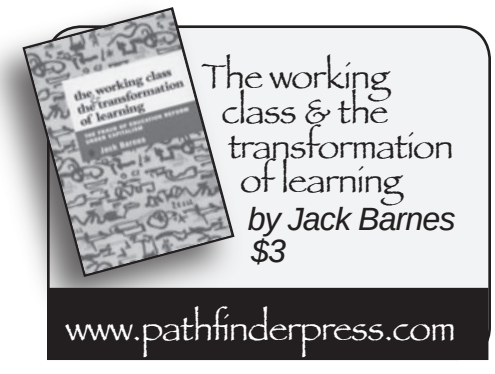
"They have not paid us anything," said union delegate (shop steward) Tearoa Potoru at the picket line outside Middlemore hospital in South Auckland.

Morning pickets at three hospitals in Auckland were followed by a rally of 150 strikers outside Spotless Services headquarters in the Ellerslie section of the city.

Spotless Services is contracted by District Health Boards (DHB) that run the hospitals on behalf of the government. Last July Spotless locked the workers out for nine days. The union responded with pickets and rallies. After the courts declared the lockout illegal, Spotless finally agreed to increase the starting rate to NZ$14.25(U.S. $11.11) an hour, a $2 to $3 pay raise for many workers.

The company then cried poverty, claiming it had underestimated the amount needed to cover the increase under DHB contracts. Following the April 2 strike the DHBs increased their funding to Spotless. The workers will receive back pay for the 10-month delay in the payout.

—Ruth Gray



Meat packers in Minnesota demand control of line speed

BY REBECCA WILLIAMSON

SOUTH ST. PAUL, Minnesota, April 28—Beef slaughterhouse workers at Dakota Premium Foods will vote on the company's latest contract offer May 7. The vote by 250 workers represented by United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW) Local 789 will come after three months of renewed negotiations.

The bosses are asking for a five year contract with raises of 40 cents an hour at signing and 30 cents an hour each year after that. Their proposal includes no back pay to July 2007, when the previous contract expired, and a significant increase in what workers pay for medical coverage. Management has also refused the workers' proposals to include some control of the line speed in the contract.

The union negotiating committee—made up of a dozen workers, two union staff members, and Don Seaquist, Local 789's president—is opposing the company's offer. The April 23 issue of *Workers' Voice*, which is produced weekly in Spanish and English by workers in the plant, explained that when the increased medical costs are added to the low pay offers most workers will get a total raise of about $1 an hour or less after five years.

"We are only asking for what we deserve," says the newsletter. "And first of all we deserve to be treated with respect, not offered deals that insult our intelligence and lower our standard of living. Our negotiating committee opposes the company's unjust 'offer.' We continue to call for $.50/hour raise per year, including going back to July 2007, and no increase in medical costs."

The *Workers' Voice* continues, "We also need to continue to fight for safety on the job. . . . Injuries from serious cuts and fractures to strains and the wearing down of our joints occur every day. Last week more than one worker went to the hospital and clinic." The workers are proposing the contract limit the line speed to a maximum of 94 cows an hour with a worker checking. "We won this in 2000 after our sitdown strike and we can win it again," the newsletter explains.

UFCW Local 789 is one of the sponsors of a May Day march in St. Paul demanding legalization of all immigrants and an end to raids and deportations. In addition to supporting immigrant rights, Local 789 members from Dakota Premium will reach out for solidarity and publicize their fight when they join the demonstration. The union members are also organizing a contingent for the large Cinco de Mayo parade and celebration in St. Paul May 3.

Rebecca Williamson works in the boning department at Dakota and is a member of UFCW Local 789.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

25 CENTS
THE MILITANT
A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

May 13, 1983

NEW YORK—Vietnam's victory against U.S. aggression would have been impossible without "the solidarity of millions of people around the world," Nguyen An told a meeting of more than 250 people here April 30, the eighth anniversary of the fall of the U.S.-backed Saigon regime.

An, who is first secretary of Vietnam's mission to the United Nations, addressed a rally sponsored by the Militant Labor Forum. The meeting was organized to answer Washington's renewed propaganda attacks against Vietnam and to protest new Vietnam-style wars in Central America and the Caribbean.

The successful event marked an important victory over a large and well-organized group of rightist Vietnamese exiles, whose attempt to physically break up the gathering failed.

THE MILITANT
PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE
NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

May 12, 1958

With both capitalist parties publicly committed for months to extending unemployment compensation for the millions of jobless whose benefits have already run out or soon will do so, the House of Representatives finally passed the stingiest and most anti-labor bill possible. The Democratic Party, which controls the House with 234 seats to the Republicans' 200, was supposed to be sponsoring a slightly better unemployment compensation extension bill, but when the vote came, only 148 Democrats voted for the better bill.

This is another example of the shell game regularly pulled on pro-labor voters by Northern Democrats, just as they pull the same trick on Negro voters with civil-rights organizations.

THE MILITANT
Weekly Organ of the Communist League of America [Opposition]

May 13, 1933

Only seven weeks were required for the German counterrevolution to complete its first stage. The Hitler government emerged on January 30. At its pompous session in Potsdam on March 21, the Reichstag sealed the fate of parliamentary democracy and conferred full power upon the government. That period decided for the time being the issue of Communism or Fascism in Germany. With that commences an entirely new historical period for the working class which will have its serious repercussions throughout the world. The German workers retreated without a struggle. The Communist Party leaders were revealed as the organizers of defeat. Fascism remained the victor and has now been able to consolidate a virtual dictatorship.

‘More people are standing up to say: Enough!’

Flor Crisóstomo presses fight against U.S. gov’t effort to deport her

BY JORGE LERTORA

CHICAGO, April 26—“Some people say marching won’t accomplish anything except to cause a backlash and bring more deportations, but they are wrong,” said Flor Crisóstomo, 29, in an interview today. “I believe the May Day march is necessary because we need a voice.”

On January 28, factory worker Crisóstomo announced her refusal to report to immigration authorities for deportation. She accepted sanctuary in the Adalberto United Methodist Church in Chicago’s predominantly Puerto Rican Humboldt Park neighborhood.

“My act of resistance is an encouragement not to accept these laws, not to accept the exploitation of a ‘cheap’ workforce, to fight to win better services,” she said.

Crisóstomo was one of more than 1,100 workers arrested in an April 2006 raid of 40 plants owned by the pallet manufacturer IFCO Systems. Of the 38 workers at the plant where Crisóstomo worked, 6 participated in a March 10, 2006, demonstration for legalization. “The boss didn’t give us permission but we went anyway,” she told the *Militant* in February.

Pointing to ongoing struggles by workers against Social Security no-match firings and immigration raids, she said, “More people are standing up to say they have had enough of all this.”

“The struggle of the workers at Wheatland Tube in Chicago, the Micro Solutions workers in Van Nuys, California, the farm workers in Immokalee, who are of indigenous origin like me—they are marching onto the stage and taking the floor with confidence, not waiting for anyone to call on them to struggle,” she said. Tomato farm workers in Immokalee, Florida, have been organizing protests against low pay and bad working conditions since the 1990s.

“This May Day people of many nationalities will march, not only Latinos. Moreover, this is how we will continue to forge the alliances necessary to continue fighting after May 1st,” she explained.

“More people understand that we live under the same oppressive system,” she said. “African Americans have the same problems we have—jobs and working conditions, education, health care, other benefits. For that reason it’s necessary for us to unite and not allow ourselves to be divided.”

“When we work together we can always figure out a way to communicate, even though we speak different languages,” Crisóstomo said.

“It would also be good if the truckers stopped work and protested the high price of fuel,” she added. “That’s what May Day is truly about.

“It is important for us to unite because we are all under the same boot of the same oppressor,” Crisóstomo said. “I liked the sign that I saw at the May Day march in 2006 ‘The giant wasn’t sleeping, he was working.’ That has a lot of meaning for me.”

Militant/Martha Contreras

Flor Crisóstomo at Chicago’s Adalberto Church April 25

Vietnamese

Continued from front page

and Customs Enforcement.

Under an agreement signed in January between Washington and Hanoi, some 1,500 Vietnamese who entered the U.S. after 1995, and who are labeled by the U.S. government as criminals, face immediate deportation. Another 6,200 who entered before 1995 have received notices threatening deportation to a third country.

“These are people who are here because the U.S. was dropping bombs on the country their mothers and fathers considered home,” said Rhummanee Hang, one of the speakers at the protest.

A line of students, representing people threatened with deportation, kneeled on the pavement with signs around their necks with the “crimes” considered grounds for deportation: “I’m being deported for writing a bad check”; “Deported for being accused of gang affiliation”; “I’m being deported but I’ve already served time”; “I’m being deported for not doing my taxes”; “Deportable for urinating in public.”

Similar protests took place the same day at campuses throughout California, including the University of California, Los Angeles, the University of California, Berkeley, the University of the Pacific in Stockton, Stanford University and the University of California, San Diego.

California laundry workers win union representation election

Hugo Camacho

VISTA, California—Laundry workers at the Prudential Overall Supply plant here voted April 25 to unionize. The workers will be represented by UNITE HERE.

Last September workers went on strike over unfair labor practices by management and won broad solidarity for their fight. “The new members of UNITE HERE will be there in San Diego on May 1. It’s International Workers Day—it’s our day,” Hugo Camacho, a UNITE HERE organizer, told the *Militant*. Camacho said that workers from the Vista facility will be forming a contingent in the San Diego march.

Elias Maturano, a worker at the plant, told the *Militant*, “We are very happy to celebrate our victory for a union with everyone, all workers.”

—RICK TRUJILLO

Make good use of ‘Economic Stimulus’ check

BY PAUL PEDERSON

As the *Militant* explained in a front-page appeal in our March 3 issue, we are urging readers to donate the $600 checks many will soon receive from the federal government’s “Economic Stimulus Act of 2008” to the socialist press.

On April 26 the Internal Revenue Service announced it is sending out the first payments—heralded by politicians as a stimulus to the U.S. economy. *Militant* editor Olympia Newton announced the same day that readers who send their checks to the *Militant* will see the attempted bribe put to good use—strengthening the paper’s coverage of working-class struggles around the world.

Newton noted that these checks are a pittance from the U.S. government. They are truly blood money payments intended to make it appear as if the government is doing something for us, the workers, while the employers seek to drive down our standard of living and compromise our safety in face of the mounting economic crisis. “No wonder workers scoff at the idea that $600 is anything more than a drop in the bucket to cover the mounting bills and debt that hang over our heads,” she said.

The government is excluding workers without “valid papers” from receiving a payment.

Another way that supporters of the *Militant* are putting their blood money payments to good use is through the Socialist Workers Party Capital Fund. “We are urging SWP members and organized supporters, and the members of the Young Socialists, to send contributions of these tax rebates to the SWP Capital Fund,” said SWP leader Norton Sandler in an interview. He emphasized that party members have a proud tradition of contributing blood money payments they receive from bosses as production or safety bonuses, or “profit-sharing” checks, to the work of the party.

Members of the party also contribute checks they receive from unions when participating in contract negotiations or related activity in the labor movement to the Capital Fund.

Such contributions to the Capital Fund are set aside for long-term publishing projects. They help to ensure that the working-class vanguard in this country and around the world will be able to study the lessons of working-class struggle and the history of the communist movement for decades to come.

Cuba and the Coming American Revolution

By Jack Barnes
With a new forward by Mary-Alice Waters

THIS IS A BOOK about the class struggle in the United States, where the revolutionary capacities of workers and farmers are today as utterly discounted by the ruling powers as were those of the Cuban toilers. It is about the example set by the people of Cuba that revolution is not only necessary—it can be made. ($10)

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Cuba's land reform, internationalism in Africa discussed at Iowa campus

BY SETH GALINSKY

AMES, Iowa—"We only hear one side of history," said Keith King from the group Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences (MANRRS). "We just hear that Fidel Castro is a bad person. They don't teach us that he stood up for what he thought was right in opposing a dictator who was backed by the U.S."

King was one of several panelists at an April 24 meeting at Iowa State University here to discuss the book *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution.* Most of the 115 attending the event were ISU students, including many originally from Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Several retired and working farmers also attended. The meeting was sponsored by a dozen student groups and university committees, including the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences.

Speaking along with King were Juan Luís Vivero from the Asociación de Latinoamericanos; Aaron Bleich from the Socialist Club; Mack Shelley, professor of political science and statistics; and Mary-Alice Waters, editor of the book. The meeting was chaired by Isela Guzmán from the Asociación de Latinoamericanos, and Christopher Hudson of MANRRS. The panelists' remarks sparked a wide-ranging hour-long discussion that for many continued informally for another couple of hours at a local cafe.

"More than anything else," Waters said, *Our History Is Still Being Written* "is an introduction to the Cuban Revolution—what it's about, who made it, what it means when working people take state power and use it to transform their society and themselves."

The book, published by Pathfinder Press, contains interviews with three generals of Chinese ancestry—Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui, and Moisés Sío Wong—who as teenagers joined in the revolutionary struggle to overthrow the U.S.-backed Cuban military dictator Fulgencio Batista in the late 1950s. All three remain leaders of the revolution today.

The questions the Cuban people faced are important also in the United States, said Waters. "Is socialist revolution possible in the United States? How do we accomplish here the kind of transformation that was carried out in Cuba?" she asked. "Is this possible in the United States, the most powerful imperialist empire in the world? And it will be the last empire," she added.

In her remarks Waters shared the importance of the 1959 land reform in defining the class dynamics of the Cuban Revolution, and described the development of small-scale urban agriculture in meeting the food crisis the Cuban people faced in the 1990s.

Vivero said he had read a lot about Cuban revolutionary leaders Che Guevara and Fidel Castro, but that until reading *Our History Is Still Being Written*, he did not realize the role of ordinary working people in leading the revolution.

"I also did not know about the role of Cuba in helping people in Africa win their independence" from the colonial powers in Europe.

"I think one reason the Cuban Revolution has survived," he said, "is that Cuban young people have seen how hard life is" in capitalist countries around the world where tens of thousands of them today volunteer to provide free medical care.

Shelley focused his comments on the Cuban role in Angola. "Defeat of racist apartheid at Cuito Cuanavale in March 1988 was a victory for all of Africa and for the world," he said. Cuba has proven that a small country can beat an imperialist power.

Bleich spoke about the situation facing young people in the United States and the role of youth in making change.

"Many, like myself, have to hold two jobs and still take out loans" to pay for college, he said. "And even after graduation, there is no guarantee of a job."

Later one member of the audience aggressively asked Bleich how many Cuban young people are guaranteed jobs when they finish their schooling. When Bleich responded that all are, the questioner slunk away.

It is important for young people to get involved in politics and fight for freedom, like the three generals did, Bleich said. "They were our age" when they made the revolution.

While the three generals had different social backgrounds, Waters said, all three as teens confronted the biggest decision in their lives: "Go down on their knees, or stand up and fight against the social injustices they saw around them; conform, or refuse to accept the indignities and brutalities of life under the Batista military dictatorship.

"All three decided to join the underground movement, and when it became too dangerous to remain in the cities, they joined the revolutionary army in the Sierra Maestra and Escambray" mountains.

During the discussion period, Tony Barsic, an electrical engineering student, said he had read the book before the meeting and found the sections on the "special period" and "facing the food crisis" of great interest, both for how Cuba is dealing with the need to grow more food and how it is tackling the challenge of protecting the environment.

"What lessons are there that can benefit us today, besides just waiting for the socialist revolution?" he asked. "Can't some of the lessons from Cuba be applied in other countries now?"

Cuba's example is important, Waters replied, but rising food prices, the destruction of the environment, farmers losing their land—"all these things are part of how capitalism works, not how capitalism doesn't work." We can't just copy Cuba's methods, she added. "Property relations must be transformed here as they were in Cuba."

Earlier in the day, at the invitation of Professor Ebby Luyaga, Waters also spoke to a class of 25 students on economic development in the semicolonial world, concentrating on Cuba's land reform and agricultural policies, including expansion of food production and restructuring the sugar industry today. Her presentation was followed by a lively discussion on questions such as, "What is the incentive to produce under socialism?" and "What has the Cuban Revolution done to narrow the gap between city and countryside and raise the status of women?"

Militant photos Robert Silver

April 24 meeting at Iowa State University in Ames on *Our History Is Still Being Written*. Top: Panelists, from left, Mack Shelley, Aaron Bleich, Mary-Alice Waters, Keith King, Christopher Hudson, Isela Guzmán (facing away), and Juan Luís Vivero (at podium). Bottom: Audience of 115 included students, professors, and farmers.

Our History Is Still Being Written

The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution

by Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui, and Moisés Sío Wong **$20**

www.pathfinderpress.com

Seattle campus event discusses Cuban Revolution

BY DAVID ROSENFELD

SEATTLE—"I couldn't resist learning about this chapter in Cuban history. I had no idea that Chinese were part of the Cuban Revolution," said Sassia Nelson, a leader of the Chinese Student Association at Seattle University, in welcoming everyone to an April 17 meeting discussing *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution.*

Eighty-five people, including students, professors, and others, attended the meeting, which was sponsored by the International, Latin American, African, and Asian Studies programs; the Chinese and African student associations; and the Latin American Studies Club. Alexandria DeLong, president of that club, chaired the event and spoke about the example of Cuba's internationalist support to the Angolan people fighting repeated invasions of South Africa's apartheid army between 1975 and 1988, and the Cuban doctors in Venezuela today.

Marc McLeod, director of the Latin American Studies program, observed that the book "provides fascinating first-hand detail about the process of revolution itself." Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui, and Moisés Sío Wong, who joined the July 26 Movement and Rebel Army led by Fidel Castro as youth in the late 1950s, "credit the socialist revolution for their opportunity to become leaders," he said.

McLeod recalled visiting Cuba during the depths of the economic crisis Cuba faced in the 1990s after the collapse of its principal trading partners in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. In dealing with deep-going food and fuel shortages, "the revolutionary leadership demonstrated a non-dogmatic adaptability," he said. "In *Our History*, the generals describe many of the flexible and creative ways the leadership responded to the challenges they faced."

Kan Liang, the director of International Studies and professor of Chinese history, described the massive importation of Chinese indentured laborers to work on Cuban sugar plantations in the mid-19th century. Many Chinese laborers, subjected to horrendously abusive conditions, joined the liberation wars against Spanish colonial rule, a 30-year struggle that was intertwined with the fight to abolish slavery and bonded labor of all kinds on the island. He also described China's support to the Cuban Revolution's victory in 1959 and Ernesto Che Guevara's trip to China in 1960, which was followed by 20 years of "cool" relations, he said, because of Cuba's alliance with the Soviet Union during the Sino-Soviet split.

Mary-Alice Waters, editor of the book and president of Pathfinder Press, pointed to the opening years of the Cuban Revolution, when "a land reform placed titles in the hands of more than 100,000 landless peasants, an urban reform slashed rents to 10 percent of a family's income, and a literacy campaign mobilized 100,000 young people to wipe out widespread illiteracy throughout the country in less than a year. These measures ran into head-on conflict with the property interests of the ruling classes in Cuba and the United States," she said. "And that is the source of Washington's 50 years of implacable hostility toward the Cuban Revolution."

A member of the audience who identified himself as belonging to the group Socialist Alternative said that while there is "no doubt that there have been advanc-

Continued on page 8

Socialist revolution in the U.S.: 'a historical necessity'

Below is an excerpt from America's Road to Socialism*, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for May. The author, James P. Cannon, counters the "wisdom" of liberals and conservatives alike that socialism has no future on American soil. Cannon was a founding leader of the communist movement in the United States and served on the Executive of the Communist International in 1922. He was Socialist Workers Party national secretary until 1953 and national chairman until 1972. Copyright ©1975 Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission*

Trucker directs fellow drivers to a protest in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, March 22. Rising prices for basic necessities are generating protests by working people. Cannon explains how the class conflicts inherent to the capitalist system will "generate a social crisis capable of exploding far sooner than the wise men dream."

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY JAMES P. CANNON

Our subject tonight, "The Coming Struggle for Power," refers to the showdown struggle between the workers and the capitalists to decide who shall be master in the American house. Is it looking too far ahead to put this question up for discussion now? I don't think so.

I know that many people can't see this coming struggle for power in our land, because immediate indications are not observable to them. They see what's happened in the rest of the world, but imagine that America has some special immunity. They are profoundly mistaken. The workers' revolution is on the historical agenda in the United States, and not too far down on the agenda at that.

Everybody knows that the rest of the world is badly shaken up. Hardly a week goes by but a new country swims into the headlines with the announcement of a new crisis, or a revolution, or something of that sort. For the past couple of weeks the Allied world has been agonizing with France, over the crisis in the French cabinet. If my recollection is correct, that particular crisis was solved the other day, if it hasn't broken loose again since the evening papers went to press.

We take it for granted that the whole world is in crisis and upheaval; the evidence is there for all to see. But here in the United States, in this land especially favored by superior virtues, by luck, or as some may say, by Providence, we are reminded that nothing of the kind is happening. That's true. It is also said that it can't happen here. That's not so true.

On the surface everything looks good for the ruling monopolists. In contrast to all the rest of the world, social relations in the United States alone appear to be stable. There's no crisis. No real upsurge in the class struggle. Not even serious strikes. The recent elections gave convincing proof of this social stability at the moment. There was no challenge to the rule of the bourgeoisie in the last election. In fact, big capital felt so sure of itself that it could dispense with the Democratic-labor coalition which had governed America—for the benefit of big capital—for the past twenty years. The monopolists felt such firm ground beneath their feet in this country—not in the rest of the world, but here—that they could dispense with the political regime of twenty years, the regime which in part had leaned on the support and cooperation of the organized labor movement. They stepped forward to rule directly in their own name. That was the meaning of the Eisenhower victory. . . .

It is utterly utopian, in my opinion, to expect that the present stability in one country alone can endure. The very narrow class base of the Eisenhower regime will make it more vulnerable, deprive it of cushions and shock supports, such as the Roosevelt and Truman administrations had in their alliance with the labor bureaucracy and its consequent support of the official policy.

A social crisis in this country is certain. As a matter of fact, a social crisis, as I view it, is already in the making. The unsolved crisis of the thirties, only artificially suppressed by the device of war and armaments expenditures of many hundreds of billions of dollars; the whole world situation—all things conspire together to generate a social crisis capable of exploding far sooner than the wise men dream.

May BOOKS OF THE MONTH

PATHFINDER READERS CLUB SPECIALS — 25% DISCOUNT

America's Road to Socialism
by James P. Cannon
Presents the coming confrontation between the producing majority and the wealthy few, and a perspective on what the United States will look like under a government of workers and farmers. $14.
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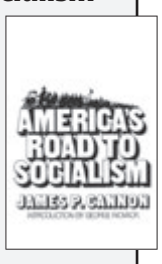

Socialisme et l'homme a Cuba *(Socialism and Man in Cuba)*
by Ernesto Che Guevara
$7. **Special price: $5**

Cuba Will Never Adopt Capitalist Methods
by Fidel Castro
Cuba's rectification process, its contributions to building socialism worldwide, and the victory of Cuban-Angolan-SWAPO forces against the South African army in southern Angola in early 1988. $6.
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Seattle campus event on Cuba

Continued from page 7

es in Cuba, there is also a dictatorship." He asked Waters if "now that Fidel Castro no longer heads the government, will the Cuban people rise up to form a true form of democratic socialism?"

Waters responded that contrary to the picture often given by the U.S. press, "Cuba is not a dictatorship. Working people there determine governmental policies to a greater extent than anywhere else in the world. Like the opening years of the Russian Revolution," she said, "the Cuban Revolution has established forms through which the will and interests of the working class are expressed." She pointed to decision-making processes which involve broad input from mass organizations, factory committees, and workers' assemblies. "These are not structures that correspond to any institution of 'democratic capitalism,'" she said. "In Cuba, a different class is in power, the working class."

Waters added that Cuba "is in no way a utopia, and Cubans who support the revolution are the first to point to its faults. But it is closer to what socialists and communists have always fought for than anything else that exists in the world today."

In response to questions and discussion about whether Cuba's new president Raúl Castro is more open to following the "Chinese model," as the U.S. press states, Waters noted that Cuba is not following any "model," but discovering its own road. "As Fidel has frequently said, the Cuban leadership thinks the worst mistakes they made were because they once thought that others knew better than they did how to build socialism."

Asked about the changes taking place in Cuba in recent months, such as the opening up of tourist and the availability of cell phone services, Waters replied that these popular measures are not being adopted because Fidel Castro is no longer president. "They have been in the works for some time and are possible now because of the strengthening of Cuba's economic situation."

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SWP CAMPAIGN STATEMENTS

Jail the cops who killed Sean Bell!

We devote our editorial space this week to publish the statement below released April 25 by Martín Koppel, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress in the 15th C.D. in New York.

I join with working people everywhere who are outraged at today's decision by the Queens Supreme Court to clear of all charges the three cops on trial for the 2006 shooting of Sean Bell, gunned down in a hail of 50 bullets hours before his wedding. We stand with those protesting in the streets to say: justice will not be served until the killer cops are jailed for their crime.

Judge Arthur Cooperman's explanation of his verdict was a classic case of what Malcolm X called "making the victim look like the criminal." The judge indicted not the police but Bell and his two friends who survived and testified.

Cooperman said prosecution witnesses lacked "credibility" because some had "criminal convictions." He simply gave credence to the word of the cops against that of their victims—typical of how the class-biased U.S. court system routinely treats working people.

District Attorney Richard Brown played his part in the injustice. He not only failed to get a conviction on even the minimal charge of "reckless endangerment," but had the nerve to praise the "learned" judge and tell people to accept the verdict.

Bell joins the long, growing list of working people—in their majority Black—killed by the New York police, from Eleanor Bumpurs, shot in 1984 when she resisted eviction from her apartment, to Amadou Diallo, a West African immigrant shot 41 times in the vestibule of his apartment building in 1999. In none of these cases did any cop do a single day behind bars.

These killings are not the result of "mistakes" or "bad training." The purpose of the police—and of the courts and the entire "justice" system—is to serve and protect the tiny ruling class of billionaire families and to keep working people in check.

They hope that fear of cop violence will keep us afraid to organize or to protest employer assaults on our living standards and rights. Cops are used to attack union picket lines and protests. Immigrant workers face daily police harassment, from workplace raids to stops demanding to see ID. The wealthy rulers justify these attacks by seeking to criminalize working people.

However, as millions of immigrants have declared in the streets over the last two years, "We are workers, not criminals!"

I urge opponents of police violence to join the actions on May 1 demanding legalization of all undocumented workers and an end to raids and deportations. Those nationwide actions will strengthen the fight against police brutality.

The verdict in the Sean Bell case confirms once again that to win justice, working people cannot rely on the bosses' government or on their parties, the Democrats and Republicans. We need to organize broad protests in the streets to press that fight.

We need a labor party, based on fighting unions, that will take on the twin capitalist parties in the political arena. A labor party would mobilize working people to demand: Jail the killer cops!

Socialist candidate: Legalization now!

Continued from front page

working class. They show that the only way to respond to the terror tactics of the employers is to reach out for solidarity and fight them.

My running mate, Alyson Kennedy, is marching in Chicago, where the mobilization of hundreds of thousands the last two years in that city has made the march there one of the most broadly sponsored May Day actions in the country.

A group of sheet metal workers from the Wheatland Tube factory outside Chicago, who are fighting the bosses' attempt to fire many of them over Social Security "no-match" letters, are among the vanguard workers marching in that city.

Struggles like these are putting their stamp on May Day. They show why the battle for legalization is not just a struggle for immigrants. "Legalization now!" is a banner that must be raised by the entire labor movement.

The bosses are pushing for workers to absorb the brunt of the unfolding economic crisis. They are driving down wages, gutting benefits, speeding up production, and stretching out the work day, work week, and the working life of our class. Their profits depend on keeping a pool of immigrant labor in second-class status. They use this reserve army to drive down wages. When workers fight back, the employers and their government turn to the weapons of the immigration raids, the "no-match" letters, and racist campaigns.

The bosses hope that as joblessness rises, we will stay divided and weak and blame fellow workers—not the bosses and their system.

But when workers decide to fight, the rulers' tactics backfire.

A recent example of this is the fight by workers at Dakota Premium Foods. As a worker at that St. Paul slaughterhouse in 2000, I joined the successful campaign to organize a union there.

In January the company tried to win a vote to decertify the union. In the months leading up to the vote the bosses shifted their hiring practices. They began hiring many native-born workers, including workers who are Black, Native American, and white. They also hired many who are on court probation. They assumed that these new hires wouldn't join with the largely Latino workforce to fight for the union.

But the bosses underestimated us. The workers fought and they won many of the new hires to the side of the union. They defeated the decertification drive, and are now fighting for a decent contract.

Last week a New York judge let the cops who killed Sean Bell in a hail of 50 bullets go free without so much as a slap on the wrist. In New York, contingents of immigrant street vendors who face daily cop harassment joined the protests against this outrage. Others encouraged those fighting for justice for Sean Bell to join the May Day rally too.

Through these struggles we can see the road towards the transformation of the unions into fighting instruments. On that basis the working class can forge a labor party. A party that will take workers' struggles into the political arena and challenge the twin parties of the ruling class—the Democrats and Republicans.

By standing together this May Day we are taking a step along this road. Legalization now!

Truckers protest

Continued from front page

maintenance.

Drivers who work for big trucking companies also are pressured by climbing fuel prices, Garret said, because companies offer bonuses for better mileage. That means driving slower and working longer hours, often without sufficient rest in between shifts.

"The freight rate, at about a dollar a mile, hasn't changed for years," said driver Bucky Newman. He said his truck "grossed $900 yesterday and $650 went to fuel."

The largest number of drivers came from Pennsylvania. Two busses came from near Harrisburg and one from the Gettysburg area, according to Jenna, an activist with Truckers and Citizens United. She had organized a cookout the night before for truckers that drove down from Maine and stayed the night in Pennsylvania.

About 50 dump truck owner operators and drivers from the Washington area organized in the United Metropolitan Truckers Association also participated, according to R.L. Hall, a protestor who owns 15 trucks. In order to make the most of every run, dump truck drivers are often forced to run overloaded, he said.

N.Y. cop acquittal

Militant photos by Maura DeLuca

Protests met April 25 acquittal of New York cops on trial for killing Sean Bell. Top: Marchers carried numbered signs representing the bullets unleashed on Bell and his friends, April 26 in Harlem. Inset: Immigrant street vendors joined April 25 action in Queens.

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friends Trent Benefield and Joseph Guzman were sitting in Bell's car outside a night club in Jamaica, Queens. Bell had gone there to celebrate his bachelor party hours before his scheduled wedding. Both Benefield and Guzman were seriously wounded. A grand jury last year indicted three of these cops—detectives Gescard Isnora and Michael Oliver for first- and second-degree manslaughter and detective Marc Cooper for reckless endangerment. These cops, who fired 46 of the 50 bullets, claimed they opened fire because they thought Guzman was reaching for a gun. The three Black youth were unarmed.

The cops "should have gotten what they deserve. If I did it, I'd be doing 25 to life," Benefield told the media upon leaving the courthouse after the verdict was announced. He vowed to "keep fighting" for justice.

"It's outrageous there could be any conceivable circumstance for a police officer to shoot unarmed people," said Susan Duncan, 30, an SEIU member at the April 25 rally. Duncan, who attended part of the trial, added, "The judge said prosecution witnesses weren't reliable, but it was the defense star witnesses who weren't reliable."

"Today it's him [Sean Bell], tomorrow it could be me. They treat me as a criminal too," Rogelio, 40, an immigrant who is part of Vamos Unidos, an organization that fights against police harassment of street vendors, told the *Militant.*

In his decision Judge Cooperman disregarded the testimony of numerous prosecution witnesses. He claimed that these individuals presented "inconsistencies in testimony," had prior "criminal convictions," and unacceptable "demeanor on the witness stand." He said he didn't believe the prosecutions' key witnesses—Benefield and Guzman. Cooperman also said that the prosecution failed to prove that the shootings by the cops were unjustified.

Throughout the trial the approach taken by the prosecution—Queens District Attorney Richard Brown—came under criticism. The prosecution, for example, provided grand jury testimony from the detectives to Judge Cooperman during the trial. This move precluded prosecutors from questioning the detectives on the witness stand.

Upon hearing the verdict, Brown praised Cooperman as "one of this country's most respected and learned jurists."

The U.S. Department of Justice announced it will investigate the case for violations of federal criminal civil rights statutes. However, federal convictions of cops acquitted in a state court are highly unlikely, according to the New York *Daily News.* A Syracuse University report reveals that federal prosecutors declined to file charges in 98.7 percent of cases where officials are charged with civil rights violations.

On April 26 hundreds of protesters marched 20 blocks through Harlem, chanting "No justice! No peace!" Fifty of the marchers carried placards bearing big black numbers for each of the 50 police bullets fired at Bell and his friends.

Willie Cotton and Maura DeLuca contributed to this article.